MAY 2018
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The West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council is commissioned to enhance the development of plans, processes and procedures for extending broadband access into underserved and unserved areas of the state.

Funding Programs Can Accelerate Broadband Development In W.Va.

A message from WV Broadband Enhancement Council Chairman Robert Hinton

Thanks to many, the realization to further broadband connectivity development throughout West Virginia, notably in the state's unserved and underserved areas, has become a topic of importance from our Capitol hallways to our smallest communities. The West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council and its many partners have continued to push broadband connectivity to the top of the priority list for all West Virginians. That was the first step.

It is time that we collectively turn this awareness into action with tangible results. Here is what we need: A concerted and well-coordinated effort

by communities and businesses all across the state to effectively pursue the many funding streams that will elevate West Virginia's broadband access into one that puts us on more equal footing with the rest of the country and world.

In March, the U.S. Congress passed a $1.3 trillion omnibus spending package and it was signed into law by President Trump. Of that, $600 million was channeled to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for rural broadband investment, adding to the agency's funding for broadband development through its Community Connect program. The Council and its West Virginia Development Office support staff continue to diligently promote the varied broadband development funding programs that local elected officials and community and business leaders must actively pursue. We must invest our time into these funding programs with the same zeal as we would for any other community infrastructure endeavor.

As echoed by our state and federal leaders, broadband connectivity is a must for citizens, communities, businesses and educational institutions to keep pace with the many new developments that shape our lives. Many communities are at different stages of the broadband development process. From planning to implementation, West Virginians are taking the steps necessary to get connected.

Mobility Fund Phase II Reverse Auction

Workshop To Offer Guidance To Challenging FCC Mapping Data

The Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force (RBATF) is giving the public an opportunity to comment on the FCC's broadband assessment map to be used in the upcoming Mobility Fund Phase II (MF-II) reverse auction.

The RBATF is sponsoring a free presentation May 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Advanced Technology Center in South Charleston and it will focus on the process for challenging the identification of areas initially deemed ineligible for universal service funding through the MF-II reverse auction.

In 2017, the FCC adopted rules governing the MF-II reverse auction to award up to $4.53 billion in universal service support for mobile wireless carriers in areas that, absent subsidies, lack adequate mobile voice and broadband coverage. On February 27, 2018, the FCC released a map showing areas across the United States initially deemed eligible to receive support for the provision of 4G LTE service.

The FCC has also released a map to assist challengers that showed the initial ineligible areas where only one provider has reported qualifying service. The presentation will focus on the process by which interested parties can challenge the initial map of ineligible areas. Local government and community leaders who are interested in improving mobile voice and/or broadband services in their communities should attend.

For additional information about the presentation, please contact Nathan Eagan at Nathan.Eagan@fcc.gov or (202) 418-0991. The address for the Advance Technology Center is 1201 Science Park Drive, South Charleston, WV 25303.

West Virginia IT Business Owner Earns National Recognition

The West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council salutes Doug Tate, President and CEO of Alpha Technologies, Inc. for being named first runner-up for the national Small Business Person of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Tate, who founded his Hurricane-based company in 2000, was also recognized April 30 in Washington D.C. for being the West Virginia Small Business Person of Year. The event was part of National Small Business Week.

In 2016, Tate was honored as the SBA West Virginia Veteran-Owned Small Business Person of the Year. Tate enlisted in the U.S. Army after high school graduation and served for nine years with distinction until injuries during his service forced him into medical retirement. His military training led him to a technology career while earning a bachelor's degree in computer science and masters degrees in applied computer science and business administration. Alpha Technologies is also a certified Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business.

Alpha Technologies staffs more than 40 employees and serves 10 states and 17 countries. One current Alpha Technologies project is the installation of a 30-mile fiber underground fiber-optic loop through downtown Charleston, Kanawha City and South Charleston with the loop connecting

back to the company's global data center at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park in South Charleston. The fiber-optic loop will be able to provide existing and prospective businesses throughout the Charleston area with a gigabit connection.

Broadband Issues in West Virginia Focus of June 7 Workshop

Microsoft Corporation, the Brookings Institution and Create West Virginia are sponsoring a half-day discussion centered on broadband issues and solutions in West Virginia.

The event, **"West Virgina's Broadband Networks: Providing Access for Economic Development and Opportunity"** is scheduled for June 7 at the Culture Center on the state Capitol campus.

West Virginia's business, government, and civic community leaders will focus on the state of broadband access and local adoption efforts.

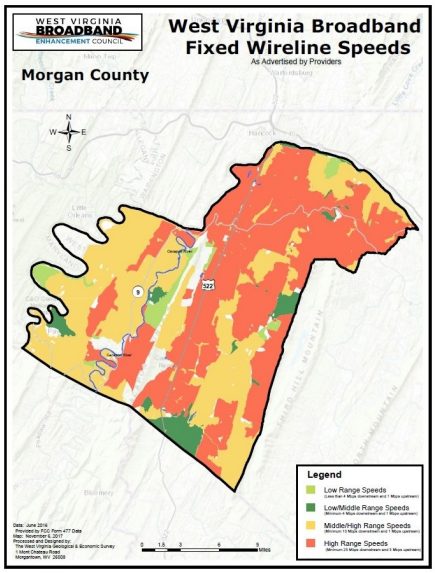
Microsoft will share information regarding the relationship between advanced Cloud services and broadband access, as well as programs designed to close the digital divide. Brookings researchers will discuss how broadband networks can make economic opportunity more equitable and accessible, and government services more efficient.

There is no cost to attend this event but registration is required.

Map of the Month
Morgan County

Each month, the Broadband Enhancement Council will feature a map based upon detailing broadband fixed wireline speeds based upon current FCC data. All county maps are available to print, save and download at the Council website.

Morgan County is this month's featured map and the county commission is a 2017 Community Development Block Grant recipient for broadband development. Nestled in the Eastern Panhandle, the Morgan County project team plans to utilize its existing telecommunication infrastructure assets to further broadband in the area.



Click on the image for a larger view.

"Morgan County is excited to have this opportunity to prepare and plan for bringing

WV Connected

Work continues on the 30-mile fiber optic ring being constructed in the Charleston area that will provide a one gigabit internet connection to governments entities and local businesses. The project is being spearheaded by Alpha Technologies, Inc.

Mark Your Calendar

Next Broadband Enhancement Council Meetings:
Thursday, June 14, 2018, 10:00 a.m. State Capitol, Building 3, Suite 800 Conference Room.

6th annual National Infrastructure Week:
A national week of events; media coverage; and education and issue advocacy to elevate infrastructure as a critical issue impacting America's economy, society, security and future. May 14 - 21. For more information, click here.

BroadbandUSA Webinar:
Infrastructure Week Special - Successful Models And Best Practices For Rural Broadband. May 16, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. For more information, click here.

Understanding Cyber Security:
May 22, 2018. Martinsburg. For more information, click here.

State GIS Conference:

county-wide, fixed wireless broadband to its citizens. Morgan County is a tourist destination as well as a bedroom community for citizens that are afforded the opportunity of telecommuting," said Stefanie Allemong, Morgan County GIS Director. "By enhancing our broadband connectivity, the county will be an even more attractive place to visit and re-locate. In addition, the school systems will be able to provide better connectivity for their students and will be even more attractive for new businesses wishing to locate here as well. We see broadband development as an enhancement for our community as a whole."

The Council urges commercial and residential internet users in this region to test their internet speed through the West Virginia Speed Test portal.

Data obtained through the speed test will support the pursuit of funding for broadband infrastructure development.

June 11-14, 2018. Marriott Town Center, Charleston. For more information, click here.

West Virginia Broadband In The News

Upcoming Broadband Opportunities Detailed To Council

Net Neutrality's Repeal Has Unclear Effect On Rural Broadband

What It Is Like To Live In Rural America Without Broadband

Preston EDA Wants Residents To Take Survey About Broadband Service

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